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ABSTRACT

Based on a review of the literature, this paper objectively examines the key issues surrounding the implementation of year-round education (YRE) at the elementary level in public schools. Following the introduction, statement of the problem, and definitions, the fourth section provides a history of year-round education in the United States. The fifth section describes various forms of YRE calendar plans. The sixth section discusses the key policy issues, which include the following: the viewpoints of parents, teachers, students, community, and administration and personnel; conflicts with family lifestyles; overcrowding; test scores; maintenance and operation costs; intersessions; educational benefits; opportunities for additional salary increases; discipline; absenteeism; extracurricular activities; and planning a year-round calendar. The majority of research indicates that YRE: (1) does not conclusively result in increased academic achievement; (2) offers a moderate savings in building and maintenance costs, but an increase in personnel salaries and cooling costs; and (3) is gaining general acceptance among parents whose children attend year-round schools, but is strongly opposed by some parents and community members. Difficulties center around assessment and implementation. The program restructures the traditional family's schedules and lifestyles and the school infrastructure, and may not be appropriate for rural areas. Two figures are included. (LMI)

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THE PROS AND CONS OF YEAR-ROUND EDUCATION AT THE ELEMENTARY PUBLIC SCHOOL LEVEL

A Master's Project

Presented to

Dr. Mary Jo Lass

California State University, Long Beach

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Early Childhood Education

by

Linda Rodgers

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INTRODUCTION

The traditional calendar used by most American schools originated from the agrarian society we once were. During that era, children were needed in the summer to tend crops, and that calendar of operation made good sense. Now, in our changing society, the format of this agrarian calendar has come into question. Some are saying that the calendar is obsolete, and it makes no sense to continue the tradition.

Change in the school year has been initiated for many different reasons; from improvement of instruction to relief from overcrowding. Today, there is a rapid increase in the number of districts participating in the year-round plan. At the forefront, are the Western states, who are in the midst of a rapid population growth. Consequently, they are experiencing stress on already existing facilities. Overcrowded schools is the most prevalent reason communities are turning to year-round education.

The idea for moving to year-round education has come from many different sources. Some communities react adversely to the idea of students having little or nothing to do during the summer months. They want the schools to step in and provide programs and activities. Some taxpayers see the empty school buildings in the summer as a waste of efficiency. Other advocates see the lengthy summer break as an opportunity for children to forget what they have already learned. As a result, teachers waste valuable class time reviewing already taught material.

Year-round schools are not new in the U.S. or in other countries. In the nineteenth century a number of U.S. school districts operated throughout the year. Year-round calendars were also used early in this century. The number of year-round schools has varied throughout the last sixty years in accordance with economic conditions and enrollment changes (Young and Berger, 1983), peaking in 1976 when there were 539 such schools in 28 states (Mussatti, 1981; Young and Berger, 1983).

Pros and cons of year-round education programs center around financial, social, and academic concerns. Advocates see benefits for pupils of all abilities, potential for uplifting the teacning profession, and a fiscal advantage to the taxpayer. But these merits are questioned by others who claim that research evidence is sparse and inconclusive. Either way, acceptance and implementation of year-round programs currently seems to be on the rise; therefore, requiring a closer look.

This Master's Project will present an objective examination of the critical key issues surrounding the implementation of year-round programs. It will not attempt to reach a conclusion; but only to present the reader with an informative presentation as to the practicality and possibilities of year-round education. This paper will be structured in the following format: I.)Introduction; II.)Statement of the Problem; III.)Definition of Key Terms; IV.)The History of Year-Round Education; V.)Types of

Year-Round Calendars; VI.)Presentation of Key Policy Issues and Their Pros and Cons; VII.)Conclusions; and VIII.)Recommendations.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Public education has entered a crisis-oriented era; it is faced with an increase in student population of diverse abilities and needs, a lack of classrooms, and limited resources to resolve current problems. One of the major responses to these problems has been the consideration of a shift in school calendars from the traditional to the year-round.

The purpose of this study is to examine the professional literature covering the rationale and development of year-round education in the U.S. The review presents the literature, examines the pros and cons of the critical issues, and analyzes the fiscal, educational, and social feasibility of year-round education.

The primary purpose (Statement of Problem) is to present the pros and cons of key policy issues of year-round programs at the elementary school level. It should provide an objective examination so the reader will have a better understanding of the concept, and be able to decide, for himself, the merits of year-round education.

DEFINITIONS

The following definitions are the culmination of the research done for this project:

Year-Round Schools

Year-round education (YRE) "is a reorganization of the school calendar into instructional blocks and vacations distributed across the calendar year so that learning is continuous throughout the year" (Quinlan, George, and Emmett, 1987).

"Year-round education includes three types: single-track, multi-track, and the extended school year. Included in the single-track and multi-plans are the 45/15, 60/20, 60/15, 90/30, trimester, quarter, and quinmester options. The extended year option includes flexible all-year plans and 11-month plans" (McLain, 1973; Ballinger, Kirschenbaum, and Poimbeauf, 1987).

"In all of the year-round schedules, the students enjoy the regular holiday periods and attend school during the week days. Vacation schedules are more frequent, and intersessions provide opportunities for remediation and enrichment. The calendars are usually 180 days. The intersessions are from 10 to 15 days each" (Bradford, 1991).

"In order to be classified as YRE or a YRS, the school must have block or staggered attendance schedules, with its population divided into any number of groups that may vary their attendance dates throughout the calendar year at the same school site. The physical plant is used for educational purposes throughout all four seasons of the year" (French, 1992).

"The term "year-round education" has often been misunderstood. Many envision children at their desks for 52 weeks with no breaks. In reality, in current YRE calendars, students attend school for the same number of days as they would in the conventional nine month schedule, but vacations as well as classes occur throughout the twelve months" (Association of California Administrators, Sacramento, 1988).

"In 1991-92, twenty-three states had year-round programs. These states have 204 school districts, 1,281 elementary schools, 142 middle/junior high schools, 18 special schools, and 205 high schools, totaling 1,646 public schools in the year-round education. The private schools have a total of 22 schools operating year-round programs. The 1991-92 grand total was 1,668 year-round schools housing 1,349,835 students. The largest number of year-round schools are located in California, Utah, and Nevada. However, Florida, Texas, and Arizona are rapidly growing in the number of year-round programs" (Bradford, 1991).

"California has led the nation in the number of schools operating year-round programs. California's enrollment of 426,422 students in year-round programs compared to the national total of 522,525 represents 82 percent of all students enrolled year-round education. Of the 628 public and private schools nationally on year-round calendars, 489 are located in California. Eight of the ten largest year-round districts (based on pupil enrollment) are located in California. Los Angeles Unified School District, alone, accounts for 27% of the total number of students in YR programs nationally. Seventy-nine of California's 1,010 districts are currently offering some type of continuous school program" (Sixteenth National Directory of Year-Round Programs, 1989-90).

Traditional School Calendar

"The traditional school calendar is organized on a nine month basis, running from the beginning of September to mid-June. The course of study for each subject is developed and carried out over the course of an entire academic year (9 month basis divided into thirds). A student's progress is evaluated at the end of each academic year" (Zykowski, 1991).

Track

"A track is a group of students who are assigned to attend school during the same instructional session. These students are on-track and off-track at the same time" (Fardig, 1991).

Single-Track Design

"The single-track design means that all students assigned to a school have the same calendar of school and vacation. Single-track designs may be chosen to take advantage of shorter breaks" (Fardig, 1991).

"In single-track strands, all students in the school are on one track; the entire student body vacations at the same times" (Peltier, 1991).

"Normally, single-track schedules are implemented to improve the equality of education; as opposed to multi-track which is often selected to help alleviate over-crowding" (Bradford, 1991).

Multi-Track Design

"The multi-track design means that there are tracks or groups of students. Each group has the same schedule of sessions and intersessions/vacations. At least one track or group of students is on vacation at any given time while the

remaining groups are in school. The multi-track design means that a school can service additional students without added construction costs or without adding portable buildings. This design also offers shorter, more frequent breaks between class sessions rather than one long summer break" (Fardig, 1991).

"Normally, the schools select the multi-track schedule to relieve overcrowding, while the single-track schedules are implemented to improve the equality of education" (Bradford, 1991).

In this paper, the majority of the issues addressed will be concerned with the multi-track design, and its variations.

Vacation or Break

"Vacations or breaks are defined as intervals of time when students are not in school (they are at home or on family vacation activities)" (Fardig, 1991).

Regular Session

"Regular sessions are defined as intervals of time used for regular instruction, part of the required number of days students must receive instruction" (Fardig, 1991).

Intersession

"Intersessions are defined as intervals of time between instructional sessions used for educationally related services such as remediation and enrichment. These services go beyond those offered in the regular sessions" (Fardig, 1991).

"An intersession is the time when students are off-track or on vacation. In some systems that time is simply vacation. In other systems the intersession time may be used for remedial activities, enrichment activities, recreational type activities, or other activities typically found during summer in traditional calendar schools, e.g. Bible camps, computer camps, music camps, and so on" (Alberta Department of Education, Edmonton, 1991).

Burnout

"Burnout is a state of physical and/or psychological exhaustion brought about by unrelieved, excessive occupational distress which may be accompanied by feelings of decreased accomplishment and a sense of depersonalization toward students" (French, 1992).

Elementary Public School

"Elementary public schools are institutions of learning financed by public funds which may include grades kindergarten to sixth or a combination of these grades. For example, one school might have first grade through third, while another school has fourth grade through sixth, or a school could have kindergarten through sixth grade and still be considered elementary schools" (French, 1992).

HISTORY OF YEAR-ROUND EDUCATION

In the early years of schooling, calendars were designed to fit the needs of the community. In rural areas, the children were needed for agricultural work during the spring, summer, and fall seasons. The majority of agrarian schools were open only five or six months, from the last harvest to the first planting. During this same era, many urban schools scheduled 11- or 12-month attendance years (Association of California School Administrators, Sacramento, 1988).

In 1847, the first plan to organize students into grade levels was implemented. As the idea gained support in the following years, curriculum was then restructured into "graded units." Rural schools were pressured to lengthen their school year in order to cover the material, while urban areas agreed to shorten theirs. This gradual merging of the rural and urban patterns created the beginning of what is known to us as the "standard" school year. By the turn of the century, the nine month calendar had become fairly widespread (Association of California Administrators, Sacramento, 1988).

During this period of history, 85 percent of the population were involved in some form of agriculture (as contrasted with only 3 percent by the mid-80's); therefore closing the schools during the summer months made sense.

When war time psychologists predicted increases in

production if factory workers were given vacations from tedious assembly lines, President Roosevelt declared that defense plant workers should be given paid time off. Since labor was scarce, it was necessary to schedule these periods when short-term workers, such as teachers, could assume the jobs. Thus, the traditional September to June calendar took an even firmer hold on tradition (Association of California School Administrators, Sacramento, 1988).

The records of the early 1900's show YRE programs in a variety of communities, including Bluffton, Indiana (1904); Newark, New Jersey (1912); Minot, North Dakota (1917); Omaha, Nebraska (1925); Nashville, Tennessee (1926); and Aliquippa, Pennsylvania (1928). They were begun for many reasons: Bluffton did it to improve curriculum and learning and provide student and family options; Newark did it to help immigrants learn English and to enable students to accelerate; Minot did it to meet the needs of the laggards; Omaha did it to offer continuous vocational training programs; Nashville did it to improve the quality of education; and Aliquippa did it for space (Howell, 1988).

Failure of these programs was attributed to a number of factors. Students from the Nashville (and Omaha) programs were graduating too young to work or effectively attend college. In Aliquippa, a multi-track quarter plan mandated a three month winter vacation for 25% of its students. Many programs failed as the result of reduced depression spending or faded with the onset of World War II.

Interest was renewed in the late sixties and early seventies as a result of the Baby Boom populations, and the limitations on schools spending for school facilities. The concept is now gaining serious momentum. At the forefront of this growth is California, as stated in the introduction (Serifs, 1990). The driving force for the renewed interest in YRE remains overcrowding, due to increasing enrollment. In California enrollment projections have inflated to 200,000 new students per year (Brekke, 1989).

Pioneers of YRE

(Taken from: Parrish, 1989)

" Superintendent William Wirt, one of the great educational pioneers, has been credited with introducing the first officially accepted year-round program in 1904 in Bluffton, Indiana. Though a small rural community, Bluffton had outgrown its space. Wirt developed a rotating four-quarter plan (fall, winter, spring, summer) to create space, but more importantly, to "improve the quality of education." Though mechanically very successful, it failed to provide the additional classrooms because, rather than mandating it, he asked for volunteers for summer months. In 1904, rural Indiana, that hope proved to be the vision of an idealist.

From 1912 to 1931, Superintendent Addison Poland conducted a K-12 year-round program in Newark, New Jersey,

to accelerate learning (students could earn 1 1/3 credits by attending all four quarters of the original Bluffton design), and to provide English classes 12 months a year for the many European immigrants. During this era, Superintendent Harold Weber of Nashville wanted to "significantly improve the quality of education." In 1925 he established a voluntary four-quarter system "to provide non-graded continuous progress learning opportunities for students." Ninety percent of the staff were on 12-month contracts where the program was in operation. As with most of the pre-airconditioning pioneers, "summer hours" were instituted to avoid the heat.

William Wirt of Bluffton later became superintendent in Gary, Indiana, where he organized the renowned platoon system to increase space and improve the quality of education by reducing classroom enrollments. During the early 1930's, he wrote The Great American Lockout, in which he decried the fact that students were denied continuous learning. The Gary community created a school during the Depression which was open seven days a week - including evenings and Sundays - for 50 weeks. It closed only two weeks in August. Lloyd Trump was the national innovation leader of the 60's and 70's. Trump was principal of this Gary school in the early 1930's" (Glines, 1992). Few of the current year-round education programs yet match the imagination and energy of these hall of fame educators.

"Year-round schools are going to grow in number," says Charles Ballinger, the association's executive director. "They have to. Educators can't justify a long summer of absence from formal education. It's all wrong for the way children learn. The traditional calendar was designed to provide helping hands on the farm. It's not a calendar for today's schools. Our job is to educate children in the best way possible. With year-round schools, you have more continuous learning and less learning loss during the summer months. That's why year-round schools are going to grow in popularity."

TYPES OF YEAR-ROUND CALENDARS

There are multiple potential designs which can be implemented. In theory, YRE is a concept offering more than 16,000 variations - a different one for every district in the nation (Association of California Administrators, Sacramento, 1988). Following are brief descriptions of the more common calendar configurations:

Single Track Calendar

"The so-called traditional school calendar is a single track plan which essentially includes a 180-day instructional block and a 3-month summer vacation. The single track/traditional calendar was designed to accommodate the needs of an agricultural economy; that need has long since passed. The 45/15 single-track calendar divides the year into four nine-week terms separated by four three-week vacations or intersessions. Students and teachers attend school for nine weeks (45 days), then take a three-week vacation (15 days). This sequence of sessions and vacations repeats four times each year, thus providing the usual 36 weeks or 180 days of school. Many districts are finding the 45/15 single track plan a significant improvement over the traditional calendar. Other single track possibilities might include one of the three tracks from the Concept 6 calendar; one of the four tracks from the

45/15, 60/20, Four Quarter, or 90/30 calendars; or one of the five tracks from the Five Quarter or 60/15 calendars" (Glines, 1990).

"Single tracking works in any school - so long as space is not the reason for implementing YRE" (Alberta Department of Education, 1991).

Multi-Track

"A year-round schedule in which the student enrollment is divided into groups, usually four. At any one time, one group is "off-track" or on vacation. Multi-track YRE works best when the school has an enrollment in excess of 600 students. In schools with lower enrollments, multi-tracking may require split grades or some grades only being on certain tracks. Each track can be considered as a "school-within-a-school" and each track normally requires the full range of services that are available to the school as a whole" (Alberta Department of Education, Edmonton, 1991).

45/15 Plan

"The 45/15, or 9/3 plan, has been particularly popular at the elementary level. The calendar is divided into four, nine-week quarters each separated by a three-week vacation.

There are three variations: the block or single-track, the staggered or multi-track, and the flexible" (French, 1992).

"In the 45/15 multiple-track plan, students normally are divided into two to four groups, depending on enrollment. For example, in a four-track version of the plan, while groups A,B, and C, are in school, group D is on vacation. The rotation continues every three weeks, thus providing for 33% additional space in the school. Each track has its own 45/15 schedule of nine weeks in school and three weeks on vacation. Teachers usually follow the track schedule of their students, however, they can be reassigned to another track, thereby lengthening their contract year and earning a larger salary" (Ballinger, 1990).

60/20 Plan

"This plan is a variation of the 45/15 schedule, with students attending school for 60 days and then vacationing for 20 days. It is similar to the trimester concept. Students rotate through the year until they have had three 60-day terms and three 20-day vacations. This plan can be conducted in either a single-track or a multiple-track format. It has become a good compromise for those who want longer teaching and vacation periods" (Ballinger, 1990).

90/30 Plan

"This schedule includes two 90-day semesters separated by 30-day vacation periods. Schools are closed during the traditional winter holiday periods" (Ballinger, 1990).

The Trimester Plan

"The trimester has been attempted off and on over the years. The true year-round trimester version has never stuck in the public schools. It calls for three equal semesters throughout the year. Students select or are assigned to two of the three semesters. A difficulty of this plan is that under most state attendance laws, the trimester does not work, as there are not enough calendar days to provide for three 88-90 day terms. It can be done by independent study or more time in school each day, as with Concept 6" (Mussatti, 1992).

The Quarter Plan

"Some colleges use this plan. This was the first year-round calendar implemented in the early 1900's. The quarter plan usually divides the calendar into four 12-week periods in fall, winter, spring, and summer. Students may select, or be assigned to, any combination of three of the four quarters. They may attend the fourth quarter on a

voluntary basis, either on or off campus. The curriculum is organized so that each quarter is a separate entity. A course begins and ends with each 12-week period. Often this plan leads to extended year program in that students have 210-240 days of instruction available to them each year" (Ballinger, 1990).

The Quinmester Plan

"The quinmester plan offers 5 nine week semesters, or terms, or blocks of time. Students attend any of four of the five if its voluntary, or as assigned four of the five mandated. This plan has been particularly popular at the high school level; especially those high schools which already have strong summer school programs which can be easily converted to a nine week semester" (Mussatti, 1992).

Concept 6 Plan

"Concept 6 has been used successfully at both the elementary and secondary levels. It is particularly useful when there is lack of space. It requires that students be divided into three groups, with one group always on vacation, thus releasing up to 50% of available space for instructional use. A high school built for 1,600 students can house 2,400 under a Concept 6 three-track plan. It also can be administered in a single-track pattern. The Concept

6 Plan calls for six terms of approximately 43 days each. Students attend four of the six terms but must attend two of their four terms consecutively. For example, Group A begins in July for its first 43-day term; it is then joined by Group B for another 43 days. Group C enters, but Group A, having completed its 86 days goes on vacation for 43 days. The plan provides for 160 or more days each year. In states where 175 or more days of attendance are required, additional days can be completed by overlapping the groups on half-day sessions the first and last day of each term, by independent study and intersession programs, or by creative off-campus group activities. In states that mandate the number of minutes per year in various subjects as a substitute for the number of days, Concept 6 can operate effectively by extending the minutes of instruction each day so that the total accumulation of minutes equals the minimum number of days required by the state" (Ballinger, 1990).

The Orchard Plan

"A five-track, 60/15 calendar is featured. Rather than rotate groups of 30 students with their teacher, the entire track class goes on vacation. However, 20 percent of each classroom go on a three-week vacation. A teacher may have 35 students assigned, but only 28 at one time. The teacher retains his or her own room, teaches 225 days, receives commensurate pay, and still has eight weeks of vacation

days. The students rotate in and out in groups of seven" (Glines, 1990).

How Much Space Could You Save?

Year-round calendars can increase building capacity by 25-50 percent. The chart below show how much space (in percentage) can be saved by the implementation of such YR calendars: (Taken from: Glines, 1990).

Calendar	Percent Increase
Concept 6	50
Modified Concept 6	50
60-20	33
45-15	33
90-30	33
60-15	25
Orchard	25
Four-quarter	25
Quinmester	25
Concept 8	33

ADVANTAGES

ONE TRACK	TWO TRACKS	THREE TRACKS		FOUR TRACKS				FIVE TRACKS		
Single Track	2 Tracks	Concept 6	Concept 6 Modified	90/30	60/20	45/15	4 Qtr	60/15	Orchard	5 Qtr.
	100%	50%	50%	33%	33%	33%	33%	25%	25%	25%
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
		●	●	○	○	○	●	●	●	
		●	●	●	○	○		●	●	●
		●	○	○	○	○	●	●		●
		●	○	○	○	○	○	●	●	○
								○	○	○
		○		○	●	○		●	○	
							○			
							○			

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	ONE TRACK	TWO TRACKS	THREE TRACKS		FOUR TRACKS				FIVE TRACKS		
DISADVANTAGES	Single Track	Two Track	Concept 6	Concept 6 Modified	30/30	60/20	45/15	4 Cell	60/15	Orchard	Cell
			○	○	○	○	○	○	●		○
									●		
									●		
									●	○	○

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PARENT VIEWPOINT

The effects of parent attitude on YR schooling should not be underestimated. Hunt(1974) surveyed 117 districts that had completed feasibility studies for YR implementation. The most important predictor of whether or not a district followed through and implemented the YR schedule was attitude.

Pros

Questionnaires were mailed to parents of the 55 sixth graders in the 1988-89 YRS pilot program in Conroe Independent School District in Texas, and to those of sixth graders on the district's traditional calendar, to determine parent perceptions and satisfaction of the YR school calendar. Parent perceptions of YR and traditional calendars were grouped into four categories: (1)family schedules, school-related activities, and student attendance; (2)student grades, achievement, homework, discipline, and enjoyment of school; (3) parent-school communication; and (4)student learning retention. Parents were to assign "grades" to their children's schools.

Year-round parents gave the school a better "report card" than traditional calendar parents; particularly in the "A" to "B" range. No year-round parents gave it a failing mark. Parents selected the YR school for the following

reasons, in order of importance: (1)learning retention, (2)quality time with the individual child, (3)learning mastery during breaks, (4)an example for life-long learning, and (5)flexibility of vacation scheduling (Baker, 1990).

In the Statewide (Utah) "Evaluation of Year-Round and Extended Day Schools Executive Report," families were asked about their experience with YRE. The majority, two-thirds to four-fifths, responded positively. They were asked to compare their experiences with their school on a year-round and traditional calendar. Between eighty and ninety percent of the respondents rated year-round education as the same or better than the traditional calendar on all nine aspects of the school experience, including overall quality of program, child's opportunity to learn, and individual attention received by the child. Seventy-eight percent of year-round families gave year-round education a positive or very positive overall rating. When asked to express a preference for a solution to housing students in their district, seventy-eight percent preferred year-round education to all other possibilities. The choice receiving the nest largest percentage was raising taxes, with eight percent (Utah State Board of Education, Salt Lake City, 1989).

A survey of 534 randomly selected parents in a small community in Hillsboro, Oregon, found that most parents had positive attitudes toward year-round schooling as long as family members and neighborhood children had the same vacation periods (Hill, 1980).

In 1991, graduate students at North Carolina State University conducted an evaluation of the first two years of the YRE Program of the Wake County Public School System. The evaluation involved surveys of 350 parents and 42 teachers, that assessed their satisfaction with the program (Teachers will be cited in a later portion of this paper). There was a response rate of 82% for the parent survey. Almost all parents indicated that the multi-track YR calendar was suitable for their lifestyles. When asked to compare YRE with a traditional calendar, 95% of the parents believed that the YRE programs met the needs of their children better; 83% believed that YRE better promotes the development of the whole child; 60% of parents thought that child care or supervision was more adequately provided in a YRE program; and 56% felt that extra-curricular activities and special events were accommodated better in YRE (Serow, Robert, and Others, 1992).

Pelavin studied 943 parents - half of whom had children in the YR program and the other half of whom had children in the traditional calendar school. He found that over 70 percent of the YRS parents preferred it to the traditional calendar school program. Seventy-five percent of the YRS parents felt that schools improved and juvenile crime decreased under the year-round schedule (Pelavin, 1979).

In a 180 participant parent survey in Los Angeles, California, fifty-five percent of the parents reported that all their children had the same vacation schedule. About 80

percent expressed satisfaction with their children's track assignment. Parents echoed the belief that their children learned more, got less bored during vacation, and were less fatigued in the YRE program. They applauded the continuity of instruction, and some believed that school discipline carried over through the vacation. One parent noted, "Children do not experience academic loss as they do over a three-month period." Another said, "My children have experienced both traditional and year-round. The year-round schedule keeps my children from burnout and boredom. Our family is able to vacation in any season" (Quinlan, and Others, 1987).

Cons

In Baker and Johnson's (1973) summarization of the implementation of YR schooling in Pajaro Valley Elementary School District in California, they found that an unexpected source of opposition came from the Mexican-American community. Mexican-American parents charged discrimination because with a year-round schedule their children would not be able to work in the fields during the summers. Opposition swelled to the extent that a boycott school was established.

In Carpenter's (1977) study in which the majority of responses about YR schools were negative, African-Americans resonded most favorably to YR schools, while farmers were

the least favorable. Attitudes of parents who had children enrolled in YR schools tended to be more favorable toward the change in schedule, whereas other parents tended to oppose the program's interference with vacation schedules (Russell, 1976).

In the Conroe Independent School District Study (Texas), mentioned previously, parents rejected the YR program for the following reasons, in order: (1)children would be at home without siblings or friends during breaks; (2)they were already satisfied with the calendar and saw no reason to change; (3)they foresaw difficulty in scheduling family vacations; (4)church, camp, and community activities were not available during the breaks; and (5)they felt change would be disruptive to the child (Baker, 1990).

To assess thinking of parents on YRE, survey forms were sent to 398 households with children enrolled in elementary school. The results were an overwhelming rejection of the YR calendar. Only 10% of respondents favored adopting such a plan; 83% said they preferred staying with the traditional calendar; 5% indicated that they would support either schedule; and 3% had no preference. The previously mentioned opponents listed numerous reasons for opposing it. The most commonly mentioned fears were: Children from the same family would be on different school schedules; parents would have trouble finding day care; summer activities would be interrupted; the YR schedule would be costly due to the need to air-condition buildings; and the YR schedule would

interfere with planned vacations. A number of respondents also said YR schooling has not been demonstrated to be educationally effective. Respondents expressed many other doubts as well - including, kids need the summer to relax and mature; that YR schooling would not alleviate overcrowding; that teachers don't support the YR concept; and that property values would decrease. Military families expressed a special concern; that their youngsters would run into problems transferring to other school districts. Some parents worried about a lack of outdoor activities for children when the vacation fell during the winter season (Sardo-Brown, and Rooney, 1992).

Other ethnic groups have voiced some displeasure, as well. American Indians in the Los Angeles inner-city complained that the YR schedule interfered with religious ceremonies frequently held during the summer (Gottschalk, 1986), and some Hispanics complained that their children, again in inner-city areas, were attending year-round while other children in more affluent and/or less crowded areas were not (Gottschalk, 1986).

Another issue voiced by parents concerns the instances when more than one child in the family attends a YR school and each is placed on a different attendance schedule (Gottschalk, 1986).

"John Adams estimated that about one-third of the population supported the American revolution, one-third opposed breaking away from the mother country, and one-third

didn't care. These estimates may reflect the sentiments of many citizens regarding YRE" (Schmeider, 1992). A recent poll conducted by Californians for Schools found that 40 percent of citizens favor YRE, with the remainder either opposed or expressing no opinion. The problem for many districts is that the objections of the opposing one-third can be extremely vocal (Schmeider, 1992).

CONFLICTS WITH FAMILY LIFESTYLES

Vacations

The present agrarian calendar is out-dated for the lifestyles of the families of the 21st century. Employers cannot grant vacations for periods longer than one or two weeks because of business. With the YR calendar, the families will be able to schedule three or four vacations without interfering with schooling (Bradford, 1991).

A major reason for changing the school calendar is to address the vacation schedules and lifestyles of the parents. Certain professions have high peaks during June, July, and August. Carpenters, moving van drivers, loggers, farmers, resort staff, lifeguards, and baseball players are just a few of the parents who cannot take long vacations during the summer. They must skip the family vacation, take one without their children, or take them out of school during the winter months (Association of California School Administration, Sacrament, 1988). These types of families might be able to take family vacations for the first time, because their children will be out of school in the off-peak seasons on the YRE calendar (Sardo-Brown, 1992).

Many employers prefer to have their employees on vacation throughout the year, instead of only during the summer months. Favorite vacation spots become crowded during the summer, and off-peak air fares are usually less

expensive than summer fares. Some people prefer to have vacations at times when winter sports can be enjoyed. Some of the best weather for travel is in April, May, June, September, and October; months when students are usually in school (Haney, 1990).

Many families actually prefer different tracks for their children, so they can give undivided time to the one on vacation (Howell, 1988).

Schedules

The chief opposition from parents is the disruption of family lifestyles. Siblings may be on different schedules, summer jobs, Little League, Vacation Bible School, summer camp, and swimming are disrupted. Schools in Virginia Beach, Virginia, among others, abandoned their YRE programs because parent opposition was too strong to be ignored. Knoxville, Tennessee dropped their voluntary quinmester plan because of lack of parental support and interest. The idea of changing the habit of summer vacation comes hard to many people. As one writer put it, "If a grown-up columnist can't concentrate in June, good luck with 20 million kids" (Howell, 1988).

One problem with scheduling involves families with more than one child in the school system. One of the earliest questions asked is, "Will all my children be on the same track?" (Peltier, 1991).

Childcare

A major concern of many parents is the question of childcare. Many parents have arranged for care of a child during the summer months by a relative who will not be able to provide care during other months of the year. Districts considering YRE need to work with childcare centers to provide for a smooth transition for year-round childcare (Schmeider, 1992).

Communities that have tried YRE report no major problems. In fact, they often report improvements in the situation. Day care providers adjust to the new schedule and are able to provide a quality service throughout the year, without having to provide for a sudden demand in the summer. Parents often report that it's easier to get a baby-sitter for a three week period than it is for a two month period (Alberta, Department of Education, Edmonton, 1991).

McLain (1973) argued that a YR calendar is superior in meeting the needs of society for childcare.

"In some respects, parents would be the principal beneficiaries of a reformed school calendar. As women poured into the work force in the sixties and seventies, families with two working parents became the rule, rather than the exception. This was the genesis of "latchkey" children, who come home to empty houses. Schools have been slow to adjust to this development, which is now a permanent

fixture of U.S. society... Long summer vacations have become a major problem for families that must make childcare arrangements. The wealthy pay for camps, day-care programs, or summer schools that charge tuitions. But for the less affluent and poor, summer is a time for juggling schedules or allowing children to go unsupervised" (Doyle and Finn, 1985).

TEACHER VIEWPOINT

Pros

In a study by Quinlan (1987) on teacher and student attitude, about 40% of the teachers contacted were neutral about whether teacher or student attendance was better in the YR program than in the traditional program. Of the remaining teachers, 50% thought teacher attendance was better in the YR program, and 40% believed student attendance was better in the YR program. Teacher attitude was judged better in the YR program by more than two-thirds of the respondents. In some districts assignment to the YR program is prized, and waiting lists exist for these positions (Quinlan, 1987). Several teachers commented on the improved student behavior in the YR program and attributed it to the shorter terms intermixed with vacations. Teachers also expressed a sense of faster pace of instruction, which may command the student's attention (Quinlan, 1987).

In the same study by Quinlan (1987) teachers' opinions about the YR calendar are as follows: The calendar seems suitable to most teachers in the YR programs. Almost 74% of the teachers said they liked teaching in the YR program better than in the traditional one. To quote one, "I love this and never want to go back to the old system. To me it is the only civilized calendar there is." A strong majority

of teachers expressed high satisfaction with both the duration and frequency of vacations. Many felt that the YR calendar provided relief from stress, and that YR teachers were not as subject to burnout. They also saw the calendar as providing opportunities for additional teaching and seasonal vacations.

In a review of YRE research, Zykowski found that teacher acceptance of YRS increased through exposure. Teachers with more exposure to the YR program were the most accepting and positive. YRS teachers' attitudes became increasingly more positive over time. Teachers at YR schools generally had more positive attitudes toward the YRS program than did teachers in traditional calendar schools (Zykowski, 1991).

Some teachers on YR schedules report greater energy and enthusiasm for teaching as a result of the greater number of vacation periods (Schmeider, 1992).

In 1991, graduate students at North Carolina State University conducted an evaluation of the first two years of the YRE Program of the Wake County Public School System. (This study was previously mentioned in the section on "Parent Viewpoint"). The evaluation involved a survey of 350 parents and 42 teachers that assessed their satisfaction with the program. There was a response rate of 81% for the teacher portion of the survey. Almost all the teachers indicated that the multi-track YRE calendar was suitable for their lifestyles. When asked to compare YRE with a

traditional calendar, 97% of teachers said that YRE programs met the needs of the children better; 97% of teachers believed that YRE better promotes the development of the whole child; and 67% of teachers felt that extracurricular activities and special events were accommodated better in YRE.

In the "Statewide Evaluation of YR and Extended Day Schools Executive Report" (Utah), teachers responded to two questionnaires. Teachers indicated that YRE was good for students, including improved student attitude (76%), students learned more (73%), students returned from breaks ready to work (93%), and YRE benefits students (84%). Eighty-four percent of YR teachers responded that, given a choice, they would teach on a YR calendar (Utah State Board of Education, Salt Lake City, 1989).

Teachers in a YR program generally believe that the quality of instruction is better than in traditional programs. They find it easier to plan curriculum for the shorter blocks of time, and feel that the YR calendar provides ample time segments for instructions. Textbooks and other curriculum materials usually fit well into the YR calendar (Quinlan, 1987).

In a similarly structured study in Los Angeles Unified School District, teachers (and principals) were asked to complete a questionnaire about their opinions of YRS. They were asked to compare YR schools with traditional calendars. The consensus revealed that they preferred the YR schedule (Alkin and Others, 1983).

Cons

In "...A Study of YRE in California" the following data was found:

(1) A few teachers commented on the effect the calendar has on young kindergarten students. Rather than starting school in September, the child in the YR program usually begins schooling in July. In some instances the child is only 4½ years old. Teachers say that the extra few months can make a big difference in the maturity of the child, and see this early start as detrimental to some young children.

(2) Some teachers claimed that the YR program has been abused by some parents as an alternative to child care. A number of parents enroll their children in the YR program when it begins (usually in July) and transfer them to the traditional calendar in September. In some YR schools, teachers experience a large exit of students in September. They find this particularly disruptive to their programs.

(3) In one or two districts the YR calendar is rather loosely interpreted by administrators. When teachers are on vacation, they are pressured by their administration to attend certain special functions, such as classes for staff development. Although this practice facilitates the work of the administrator, it can be demoralizing to the staff (Quinlan, 1987).

In the "Statewide Evaluation of YR and Extended Day Schools Executive Report (Utah)", the process of changing

rooms after track changes created stress for teachers, and was probably the greatest drawback they saw in the program. Teachers whose own children were not on YR calendar, either in secondary school or in a traditional elementary school, experienced some of the same problems with scheduling as YR participants. Additionally, teachers who have had lucrative summer employment, and had not been able to obtain extended contracts were concerned about a loss of income (Utah State Board of Education, Salt Lake City, 1989).

A study was conducted to investigate teacher attitudes with respect to changing to a YR school program. The hypothesis was that a majority of teachers would be opposed to changing the traditional 180 day schedule to a YR schedule. The population in this study consisted of all the classroom teachers in a rural county of North Carolina. A cluster sampling of 128 teachers was employed. The research design used was the descriptive survey consisting of questions on demographic data (sex, years of teaching experience, and grade level taught) and four questions to gauge attitudes towards changing to a YRS. Statistics compared each of the attitude survey questions with demographic data. The findings were that a majority of respondents were opposed to changing the schedule (Hoffman, and Others, 1991).

Sometimes teachers find the YR calendar to be so restrictive that it does not allow enough time for preparation. Some teachers testified that they had no break

between school years; "Last year half of the teachers ended one school year on Friday and began the new one on Monday--new grade level, new classroom, new track!" (National Education Association, Washington, D.C., 1987).

In a study by French (1992), staff and development had the following complaints: (1) Difficulty changing classrooms; (2) Support staff had difficulties scheduling their services; and (3)Supplies were depleted in the summer months.

Teachers in multi-track schools have been particularly concerned about the problem of storage of materials when their track is on vacation. Because the multi-track program was designed to use space that has been vacated by an off-track group of students and teachers, the instructional materials of this group must be stored until they return. Often, storage space and time are inadequate, and assistance is not provided for packing and unpacking. Teachers have complained about lost materials (Peltier, 1991).

On the multi-track schedule, teachers and students typically return to a different classroom for each term. Thus, teachers do not have access to the classroom in advance to prepare it for the new term. Often, they start the new term teaching out of boxes (Peltier, 1991).

Combination classes, which are necessary in some YR programs, are seen as a dilution to the quality of instruction by a few teachers. One teacher described the placement of five students from one grade level into a

classroom with 25 students from the next grade because this was the only space available (Quinlan, 1987).

Mussatti (1981) stated "Although teachers favored expanded financial opportunities for extended contracts, they experienced burnout with time, and by the end of two years, often reduced the length of their contracts." There is less opportunity for the entire faculty to work together to improve education, and teachers find it more difficult to use the summer break to pursue advanced degrees.

Teachers in multi-track schools often complain about storage space, and assistance for packing and unpacking. Teachers complain about lost materials. If the group does not return to the same classroom, the inconvenience is even greater.

Roving teachers and classes report feelings of alienation from the rest of the school. Each term they must become reacclimated to a new environment. Teachers do not have access to the classroom in advance to prepare it for the new term, and they sense a lack of stability in their classes (Quinlan, 1987).

In the Utah Statewide Evaluation (1989), mentioned previously, one-fourth of YR teachers expressed a large amount of stress associated with parent conferences, and one-third responded with similar stress ratings for paperwork. Fifty-five percent of YR teachers experienced a large amount or extreme stress concerning teacher salary and forty-five percent expressed similar stress concerning the number of students with whom they work with.

STUDENT VIEWPOINT

Pros

In "YRE: Year-Round Opportunities. A Study of YRE in California," about 40% of the students believed they learn more in the year-round program than on a traditional schedule; although about one-third of them were not sure. Many students said they liked the YR program for this reason. One student said, "I like this because I learn more every year, and I remember most things when we come back to school" (Quinlan, and Others, 1987).

In a YRE Program Evaluation (Fardig, 1991), the majority of YRE students surveyed at the pilot schools seemed to have adjusted positively to the new calendar. Interviews with teachers also indicated that students, K through five, had adjusted positively to the YRE calendar. The fourth and fifth grade students who attended intersessions indicated they enjoyed the optional school days. Records indicate that from 60-70 percent of the students returned for intersessions.

Student, teacher, and parent satisfaction with the YR calendar is high (Nebo School District, 1986; Merino, 1983). According to Quinlan (1987) "In general, student responses were definitely more positive than negative about their experiences in YR education programs. Given a choice between a YR and a traditional program, more students would choose YR than not."

In the 1987-88 school year, a survey study of parents, teachers, parents, classified personnel, principals, and students was administered. The student survey was organized into three composites, measuring the students' attitude toward YR school and the reporting on the in-school and the out-of-school effects of YR by students. The scores on these composites were all positive, indicating that its students liked the YR school, and that they felt the effects were positive. Two items on the survey measured the students' attitude toward YR before the year began and at the end of that year. The results reported that students changed their attitude from not liking the idea of YR to being in favor of it. Students seemed to be ambivalent about intersessions (Christie, 1989).

In a study by the California State Department of Education, Los Angeles (1987), students' opinions of YR calendars were quite favorable. The students' views were obtained by surveying a sample of students at six of the schools visited. Four were elementary schools; one, a middle school; and one, a high school. All but one were multi-track schools. One hundred survey forms were given to each principal, who was requested to distribute them to the students at the highest grade level at the school. Five hundred, and forty-five responses were returned and analyzed for this study. Whether student responses related to school in general or the YR program specifically is somewhat questionable. Typical responses to questions regarding likes and dislikes about the YR program included:

" I like the YR program, because at a traditional school you get a chance to forget everything you learned over the vacation, but at a YR school you do not get a chance to forget everything."

"Something I like abut YR is your vacation is mixed-up."

"I like it because I do not have the same vacation time as my older sister. We get spread-out vacations. I also like it because we get vacations during different seasons."

"When I start getting sick of school, we go on vacation. When I get sick of vacation, we go to school" (Quinlan and Others, 1987).

Cons

In the previously quoted study (Quinlan and Others, 1987), a few students expressed the following oppositions: Students who expressed a dislike for the YR program frequently identified the lack of long summer vacation as the reason. Being out of synchronization with friends' and relatives' vacation time and being unable to take family trips were commonly cited. For some students the vacation schedule may have serious consequences. For example, one student wrote, "I dislike it because my brother, who is in the tenth grade, goes every summer to see my father in Florida; and because of this I have not seen my father or my sister, who is five, in five years." At least a few

students gave similar reasons for disliking the YR vacation schedule.

Students were nearly evenly divided on whether their classrooms were comfortable during hot weather. Many made comments on the discomfort during the hot summer. Several students reported that "B" track had no summer vacation and only a few air-conditioned classrooms.

In several studies students in roving classes reported that they did not enjoy moving from classroom to classroom. A few students reported moving to another classroom every three weeks.

ADMINISTRATION AND PERSONNEL VIEWPOINT

Pros

One study explored differences in the degree and type of burnout experienced by California elementary school principals. Data were derived from a survey that was mailed to a stratified random sample of 200 California elementary principals--100 from year-round and 100 from traditional-calendar schools. Both YR and traditional calendar principals reported low levels of burnout, with the exception of those who had preschool children living at home. Traditional calendar principals experienced greater stress related to compliance with state, federal, and organizational policies. A conclusion is that YR school conditions do not lead to higher principal burnout (French, 1992).

In a New York project description by Serifs (1990), principals polled noted less fatigue and higher morale among students and faculty. In addition, there was the perception that teacher absences were fewer and that retention of curricula was better in YR programs (Christie, 1989).

In "A Report on Opinion Surveys of Parents, Students, and Staff of Four-Track YRS in Cajon Valley, 1987-88" (Christie, 1989), The principals were strong supporters of the program in spite of the fact that it significantly increased their work load. The benefits they saw were more

variety of programs for students, better achievement of students, and better teacher morale.

Cons

Although principals of multi-track YR programs usually have a 12-month contract, which includes a month's vacation, they have difficulty in scheduling that vacation time. Because of the continuous nature of the program, there is no time when they can easily leave the school to run itself. As one principal said, "It (the YR program) exacts a brutal toll on administrators"(Quinlan, 1987).

One disadvantage administrators note is the lack of support from the district for services provided by the district when the rest of the schools were out for summer vacation. These services could include counselors, nurses, mail service, food service, and supplies (Peltier, 1991).

Another problem for administrators is the communication with the student body and faculty. With some students always on vacation, the administration does not always know who belongs on campus. Better communication is often needed with those students and faculty who are off-track (Peltier, 1991).

One principal calls the experience "a merry-go-round with no starting or ending." Even principals who strongly endorse the concept say there is no time for long-term planning (Goldman, 1990).

In some instances where students and teachers were in favor of continuing YR schedules, administrators often were not. The major reasons listed by the administrators were the difficulty in scheduling students and the lack of adequate clerical and computer support (Young and Berger, 1983). Administrators also felt the strain of insufficient time off. In some districts it has been necessary to add a "floating administrator" to help, but problems of continuity can exist (Mussatti, 1981).

After fourteen years of success with a YR scheduling, a Colorado school district returned to a single-track calendar. Operating schools continuously for 12 months a year created additional work for administrators at both the building and central-office levels. Year-round scheduling provided for no administrative down time in the summer months. What's more, with no more than 37 of Jefferson County's 112 schools operating YR at any one time, the central office had to meet two distinct sets of needs: Deadlines, deliveries, and due dates were different for schools on a YR schedule than for schools on a nine-month schedule. Planning for the needs of both was often confusing and difficult. Gradually, administrator burnout began to take over (White, 1992).

In a Statewide Evaluation Report (Utah), the majority of custodians found deep cleaning a challenge. Because the number of children eating lunch changed depending on the size of the tracks attending school, lunch room personnel

had moved to more flexible schedules to handle the change in number of students. The only additional staff which all schools had added was in the office, where additional personnel or additional hours for existing personnel had been added to handle registration and communication needs. Of all the school personnel, the principals appeared to experience the most stress. The additional load of students, complexity of the program, double scheduling of events, the loss of summer months for planning time, and increased stress in relationships with parents were cited as problems which YR principals face (Utah State Board of Education, Salt Lake City, 1989).

A considerable number of adjustment problems can face administrators, especially with staggered or multi-track schedules. Communication needs are particularly strong for the principal who must keep vacationing students, faculty, and parents informed of policy changes, new programs, and upcoming events. New teachers, families, and district personnel must be oriented to YRE, if they have transferred from a conventional calendar. Decision making becomes more complicated (Association of California School Administrators, Sacramento, 1988).

In a survey study of YRE in California, typical comments submitted regarding administrative duties were:

"Everything has to be done twice."

"Three separate schools are functioning at different times, with different staffs and different students. Yet

all must function as a unit, since all use the same physical building."

"Four attendance tracks require more time and paperwork."

"Students forget to return from their breaks."

"Extended contracts (hence, separate negotiations) are necessary for specialists."

"Multiple sponsors are needed for clubs and student activities."

"Each time we have an event, we must have it two times so that those off-track can also be included."

"We must repeat every faculty meeting and staff development activity."

"Information must be mailed to homes to keep people informed and involved."

"There are six changes in bus passenger lists a year." (California State Department of Education, Los Angeles, 1987).

Some principal complaints were as follows:

a. Vacations are changed from blocks of time to a few days interspersed throughout the year.

b. During their vacation days they are interrupted by urgent calls from school staff during school hours.

c. The stressful beginning and end of school year are now occurring, to a lesser extent, every six to nine weeks.

d. The work continues to accumulate on their desks during vacation days.

One principal for a YRS in Los Angeles put it this way: "Year-round school does not provide time for reflection, planning, or evaluation. There is never an ending when one can look back and say: 'That was a job well done.'"

COMMUNITY VIEWPOINT

Pros

The decision to implement a YR program affects the entire community. Child care, law enforcement, and recreational agencies are usually directly affected by the change.

The law requires public notice, a public hearing, and, if requested, an election to be held before a school district can implement a YR program. If the community does not support the idea of a YR program, another alternative must be selected. Community support is one of the most vital elements in the success of a YR program (Quinlan and Others, 1987).

But not all districts have the opportunity to consider the various options. The Los Angeles Unified School District was urged by the courts to convert to YR programs to relieve overcrowding in 1979. In two other districts the YR program was mandated because of overcrowding. When YRE is imposed on a community, the necessary local support is difficult to generate (Quinlan, and Others, 1987).

It is important that the school district coordinate the move to YRE with parks and recreation agencies and other community groups (Schmeider, 1992).

"Year-round education has been enhancing communities by offering 12-month park and recreation programs, reduced

highway congestion, less summer pressure on the police force, 12-month volunteers for health and social agencies, and continuous help for limited English speaking and special education youth" (Glines, 1990)

Some community members believe that keeping children in school and "off the streets" during the summer months contributes to a lower rate of community crime (Richmond, 1977).

Business and industry have a keen interest in the education of America's elementary and secondary school students. Eighty percent of their workers transfer directly from high school to their work sites. The leaders of business and industry have recognized the need for, and are, promoting the restructuring of America's public schools (Bradford, 1991).

Some employers have said that there are advantages in having a steady supply of part-time labor throughout the year; rather than having all students compete for a limited number of jobs during two months in the summer (Alberta Department of Education, Edmonton, 1991).

The use of community parks and playgrounds are also affected by YR school schedules. Roberts & Bruce (1976) surveyed recreation personnel in seventeen cities with YR schools and found that most recreation facilities are kept open on a YR basis to accommodate the school calendars.

Cons

The impact of YR schooling on the community at large has been studied systematically in just a few studies. MacDonald and Anderson (1974) collected data from youth agencies such as parks, churches, and the little league in Virginia Beach, Virginia, after the implementation of a 45/15 program. They reported that all agencies except the local Y's were forced to make adjustments in their delivery of services as a result of the YR schedule, and that few provisions were made for supervised playground facilities year-round. Although parents noted an increased exuberance for school attendance for their children, youngsters were also more likely to be bored during vacation, and the families were faced with increased costs for recreation and vacation activities (Probinsky, 1974).

A sampling of attitudes toward YR schooling was conducted in North Carolina (Carpenter, 1977). A stratified random sample of 2,600 licensed drivers was sent an attitude survey on YR schooling. Most respondents were against a change in the school schedule, although different attitudes were reported by geographic and ethnic groups.

Those who have implemented YRE programs report that community opposition to YR programs is usually very strong at the outset. A school or district should be prepared for opposition (Ballinger and Others).

OVERCROWDING

With a projected increase of 230,000 students in California each year for the next decade, more and more parents are being asked to participate in YRE (Schmeider, 1992). California would need an estimated $20 billion by the year 2000 just to insure adequate facilities to house all the new enrollees. This sum is calculated as impossible to raise through the current financial structure of the state (Glines, 1990).

In 1990, experts predicted that California schools would have an average of 184,00 new students each year during the 1990s, for a total of 6.1 million new students by the year 2000. Current estimates predict that this figure is more like 230,000 new students per year, and that the total in the year 2000 will be more like 7.2 million students. Growth in student enrollment is statewide, with 48 of California's 58 counties experiencing growth of at least 20% over the next decade, according to the State Department of Finance. The average growth rate for the entire state between 1989-90 and 1999-2000 is expected to be about 48 percent. Riverside County will be hit the hardest by this growth with an expected enrollment increase of 100.7 percent (Smith, 1992).

Overcrowding is a primary reason for adopting a year-round calendar. School enrollments are rising, construction costs are increasing, and budgets are

decreasing. Often communities cannot afford new buildings, portables, or additions. Even if they can, they may not be able to construct new facilities fast enough to house their overflow of students.

Depending upon the plan implemented, YRE can increase the facility accommodations from 10 to 100 percent; most commonly from 20-35 percent. A school planned for 600 can accommodate 800,if students are grouped into four tracks of 200 each, because one group is always on vacation (Association of California School Administrators, Sacramento, 1988).

California educators are being forced in new directions by such factors as: the annual state increase of students - 25% of whom are expected to have only limited English language fluency; and the growing minority pupil enrollments- 50% level statewide, and 100% in some districts (Association of California School Administrators, Sacramento, 1988).

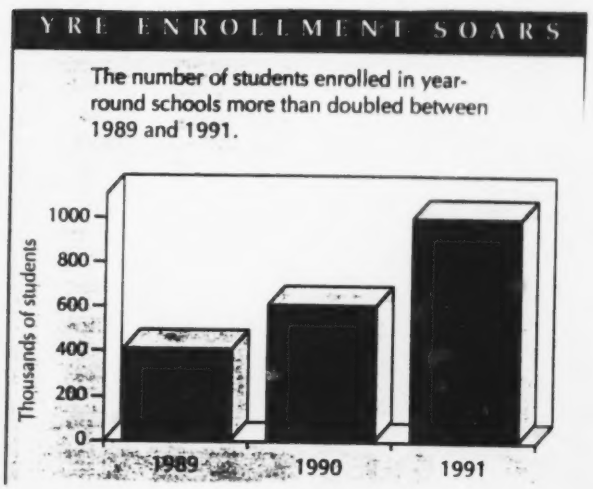
In 1980, the California population was cited at 23.6 million. By the year 2000, it is projected to reach the 32 million, and by 2030 to climb to 42.7 million; almost doubling the figures of 1980. In 1980 the white population was listed at 66.5%; the black, 7.5%; Hispanic, 19.2; Asian 5.6%; and other, 1.2%. By 2000, the estimated figures are: 52.4% white, 7.4% black; 24.2% Hispanic; 10.6% Asian, and 2% other. But, by 2030, when the population is close to 43 million, the white population is projected to be only 38.4%;

black ,6.7%; Hispanic, 38.1% (equal to the white and double the 1980 percentage); Asian, 15.6%, and other, 1.2% ("Population Changes and California's Future", Bouvier and Martin, Population Reference Bureau, Washington, D.C., 1985)."These statistics point to tremendous overburdening of recreational facilities, massive traffic congestion and corresponding air pollution, potential water rationing, bulging prisons, health and welfare crises, loss of agricultural land and timber resources, increasing numbers of ESL citizens, the replacement of the infrastructure in the state, and the search for money to fund all these and many more equally important concerns. Cultures, lifestyles, economics, and politics, as well as education in California are facing serious 'future shock'" (Bouvier and Martin, 1985).

As of July 1991, about 1 million of California's public school students in more than 1,200 schools were attending YR schools. The number of students on YR school schedules more than doubled between 1989-90 and 1991-92 (Smith, 1992).

Experience has shown that school overcrowding tends to run in seven to nine-year cycles, then a decline in school enrollment sets in. When this decline happens, many schools have chosen to remain on a YR schedule, but on a single-track strand instead of a multi-track schedule. If the district is again faced with overcrowding, it would be much easier to return to a multi-track schedule (Peltier, 1991).

Forty schools participating in a Los Angeles Unified School District study were analyzed according to their actual enrollment levels with YRS compared to school capacities prior to YRS entry. Twenty-six elementary schools, 10 junior-high schools, and four senior high schools were sampled. The reduction in overcrowding was substantial, reducing 64% over capacity to an average of 7% for each of the enrolled sessions at one school, and reducing 70% excess to about 8% with YRS participation (LAUSD, California Research and Evaluation Branch, 1983).



TEST SCORES

Pros

School districts with several years experience with YRE report that their students do as well as, or better, than their September-June counterparts, regardless of the type of YR calendar used (Ballinger, 1990).

The Buena Vista System found an increase in achievement scores, improved attendance, and a decline in dropout rates (Bradford, 1991). University of California studies of achievement scores showed YR schools outperformed traditional systems, especially for students coming from disadvantaged or non-English speaking backgrounds (Gitlin, 1988).

A model YRE program in Oxnard, California, has been in operation since 1976. Since 1981, when more than 80% of Oxnard's students enrolled in the YRE schedule, scores on the state's annual reading, writing, and mathematics scores have increased (Ordovensky, 1986).

A thesis study in Texas compared the academic math achievement of two homogeneous classes of gifted and talented sixth graders. One group attended YR schools, and the other group followed the traditional school calendar. Both groups were taught the same pre-algebra math program in the 1991-1992 school year, and data were gathered using a mid-year competency test and an end-of-year competency test.

Results indicated that the traditional school students outscored the year-round students at mid-year. However, by the end of the year it was found that the year-round students slightly outscored the traditional school students. The YR students' scores remained constant throughout the year, while the traditional school students' scores had a sharp rise at mid-term, and a sharp drop at the end of the year. However, the difference at the end of the year did not compute to be a significant difference. The researcher concluded that there was no significant difference in the sixth grade math achievement of gifted and talented students attending school year-round and traditional school year students, but the year-round school students' scores stayed more constant; which might indicate that a more steady learning process occurred with these students (Ritter, 1992).

Alcorn's results of the 1991 comparison of achievement of traditional and YR test score objectives are summarized on the following chart. A total of 27 comparisons was compiled - three grades (three, five, and six) in three subjects (reading, language, and math), and at three intervals (total, mid-point, and most recent year). In the comparison of objectives achieved and average scaled score change, the total possible number of comparisons for year-round and traditional schools was 27. A summary of the comparisons follows:

YR Schools Exceeded Traditional 17

Traditional Exceeded YR 1

No Significant Difference 9

COMPARISONS OF ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

The following tables compare the performance of year-round and traditional schools in the San Diego City School District at three grade levels and for three subjects. The objectives measured are described in the text.

GRADE 3—CAP

Testing Interval	Reading		Language		Math	
	Trad.	YRE	Trad.	YRE	Trad.	YRE
Six Year						
Objective achieved	60%	76%	65%	76%	53%	53%
Avg. scaled score change	+5.7	+19.3	+11.7	+19.9	+3.4	+10.3
Three Year						
Objective achieved	41%*	41%*	31%*	24%*	42%	35%
Avg. scaled score change	-5.1	-3.1	-7.5	-6.4	-5.3	-.4
One Year						
Objective achieved	26%	41%	39%	53%	40%	70%
Avg. scaled score change	-10.3	-3.2	-6.9	+2.4	-2.3	+7.4

GRADE 5—CTBS

Testing Interval	Reading		Language		Math	
	Trad.	YRE	Trad.	YRE	Trad.	YRE
Eight Year						
Objective achieved	61%	88%	83%*	88%*	64%	76%
Avg. school percent change	+1.2	+8.0	+12.9	+14.3	+6.1	+9.2
Four Year						
Objective achieved	28%	65%	33%*	35%*	45%*	35%*
Avg. school percent change	-2.6	+1.1	-3.0	-4.3	-3.2	-2.5
One Year						
Objective achieved	45%*	29%*	49%	33%	50%	53%
Avg. school percent change	-2.6	-4.1	-.2	-4.0	-1.5	+1.3

GRADE 6—CAP

Testing Interval	Reading		Language		Math	
	Trad.	YRE	Trad.	YRE	Trad.	YRE
Six Year						
Objective achieved	69%	83%	72%	83%	58%	58%
Avg. scaled score change	+10.7	+19.6	+7.1	+15.0	+6.0	+8.8
Three Year						
Objective achieved	44%*	50%*	33%*	25%*	39%	41%
Avg. scaled score change	-5.5	-6.3	-9.5	-11.0	-3.7	-.5
One Year						
Objective achieved	44%*	41%*	53%	66%	51%	83%
Avg. scaled score change	-1.3	-2.9	-1.1	+.8	-.1	+4.1

* No significant difference between traditional and year-round schools.

NOTE: Year-round schools included in the comparison were on single-track or multi-track calendars during the entire period 1984-1990.

Cons

Studies have indicated that there is no significant difference in achievement (as measured by standardized tests) between students on a YR schedule and those on a traditional nine-month schedule (Merino, 1983). Some authors point out that it should not come as a surprise to us that achievement is not greatly improved, because the YR calendar does not usually increase the number of days of instruction (Quinlan, George, and Emmett, 1987).

In actuality, there are no long-range studies to prove the superiority of traditional or YRE calendars in relation to knowledge retention or achievement. One study in California, conducted with three traditional third-grade classes, showed no significant differences in reading vocabulary, reading comprehension, or total reading ability in pre- and post-summer testing. In fact, all post-summer scores were slightly higher than pre-summer scores (Howell, 1988).

Merino found that out of nine studies done on achievement in the YR schools, only three favored YRE, and two of those three studied had increased the number of instructional days for the disadvantaged students. Two studies indicated that YRE lowered achievement, but overall, research revealed "no significant differences between the two types of schedules" (Merino, 1983).

A study done for the California State Department of

Education by Quinlan and associates, showed similar findings. Research revealed that California YR schools have improved, but consistently score below traditional schools; even traditional schools with similar student populations.

Mazzarella (1984), in trying to explain these types of results, points out that changing calendars and schedules will not improve achievement until educators learn to use existing schedules more effectively (Weaver, 1992).

As many evaluators have indicated, standardized tests are not necessarily appropriate to assess the impact of an instructional program. Robert Stake of the University of Illinois, a well recognized evaluation specialist, stated, "I am dismayed by my colleagues who believe that standardized achievement tests can be used to satisfy the needs of the curriculum evaluator" (Association of California School Administrators, Sacramento, 1988).

MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONAL COSTS

Pros

Proponents of YRE have compared the traditional calendar to that of businesses and industries, and see the present use of facilities as inefficient. According to Earl Gotshalk, of the Wall Street Journal, "It makes little sense for a nation of undereducated citizens to have a quarter of a trillion dollar investment in school buildings used for one half of the year" (National Education Association, 1987). "If IBM or General Motors closed their facilities and "vacationed" their personnel for three months each summer, their lack of cost-effectiveness would probably lead to bankruptcy. Similarly, the typical school system, with its buildings and resources standing idle for one-fourth of the calendar year, is hardly an example of responsible cost-effectiveness" (Brekke, 1984).

New construction of a school costs from $5-$25 million; depending upon whether a smaller elementary school or a larger high school is built. The price of land can range from $200,000 to $1 million an acre; an investment used only 180 out of 365 days a year on the traditional calendar. By changing to YRE, optimum use of already existing educational facilities will take place (Association of California Administrators, Sacramento, 1988).

While YR programs can allow teachers to lengthen their

contract year and earn larger salaries, they actually translate to school district savings. This is because individual teachers are serving more students, and the additional salaries are divided by the additional students served in a multi-track program. Thus, while gross costs may increase (such as additional salary), per pupil (per unit) costs will go down because those additional costs are divided by the additional students served (Ballinger, 1990).

Many ask how it will be possible to keep the school clean on a year-round basis, compared to a regular school year where major repairs and deep cleaning are accomplished in the summer? The reply has been that equivalent housekeeping during the year can be maintained, but additional personnel may be needed, and scheduling of maintenance and repair will be needed. Some cleaning will have to shift to night work. "A year-round school can be compared to a hospital with regard to cleaning and maintenance. Hospitals are open 365 days a year for 24 hours a day, but they are still the cleanest buildings in the community" (Alberta Department of Education, Edmonton, 1991).

"The added costs of air conditioning, 12-month support staff, limited extended teacher contracts, and altered maintenance programs do not compete with the savings in buildings, buses, textbooks, desks, landscaping, insurance, and other factors, according to available research" (Glines, 1990).

The following studies support the economic savings of the implementation of the YRE school calendar:

The Pajaro Valley Unified School District reduced their district's annual per-pupil cost of education by 4.1%; more than 90% of this savings resulted from more efficient use of classroom space. When simulated modes were used, annual operating costs of five YR schools were less than under traditional schools (Zykowski, 1991).

The Oxnard California School District estimates $10,000,000 savings is possible over a four-year period (Ballinger, 1987). The National Association for Year-Round Education estimates that $25,000,000,000 could be saved in education costs over the next 20 years, if there is significant implementation of YRE (Brekke, 1990). Early graduation of accelerated students can produce significant savings. Remediation replaced repetition in the Buena Vista, Virginia District for 47 students. This saved an estimated $149,061 in 1988 alone (Bradford, 1989).

The following study compared the cost of YRE with that of traditional education in the Oxnard California School District in 1981-82: Three approaches were used. The first computes the YRE program costs during the summer when the traditional school is not in session, revealing that an 850-student YRE school incurs $39,299 in costs during this period. The second approach computes the per student expense for students in each program, revealing that the cost for educating pupils in the YRE school was $80 less per

pupil than that in the traditional schools. The final approach computes the costs of new school facilities and operating expenses required to serve the 536 extra students now accommodated in the YRE program, revealing that the YRE program allowed the district to operate with one less building, producing a savings of $160,027 (Brekke, 1983).

In 1954 the Los Angeles Unified School District dismissed the idea of operating schools year-round, calling the program too costly (Nation's Schools, 1955). Today, the Los Angeles Unified School District enrolls more California students in YR programs than all the other forty-nine states combined, and in 1986 reported an "avoided cost" savings of more than $400 million in the construction costs for facilities needed if YR schools had not been carried out (Gottschalk, 1986).

Cons

YRE can cost more, however. It requires increasing the length of contracts for secretaries and principals from 10 to 12 months, creating supplemental contracts for nurses and special resource teachers, and forcing more expensive night and weekend maintenance contracts (Association of California School administrators, Sacramento, 1988). Year-round operation will cost more in additional personnel for coverage of custodial vacations, more power and water usage, and fuel costs for hot water. More use means more wear, and therefore, some additional maintenance (Peltier, 1991).

School maintenance is also cited as a disadvantage of the YR calendar, as there is no good time for major cleaning and repairs (Mussatti, 1981). Tax payers also worry that YR schooling will incur higher air-conditioning costs (Sardo-Brown, 1992). For a YR program to meet the anticipated financial savings, the schools must operate at top capacity (Peltier, 1991). Additional transportation expenses also need to be included, as well as the expenses involved in properly preparing the community, and revamping the school curriculum, if necessary. Because many of these expenses and considerations are overlooked in the planning stages, savings in some instances have been so minimal that YR schooling has been abandoned after just a few years of implementation (Merino, 1983).

INTERSESSIONS

Foreign Language

An increasing number of students come from homes where English is not the primary language. Proficiency in any language requires formal instruction on a continuous basis. A long summer vacation disrupts this formal training. Three months away from formal instruction hinders language acquisition (Ballinger, 1990). Therefore YR calendars are more beneficial to the acquisition of another language. YRE with included intersesions offers an improved setting for teaching foreign languages or ESL, which are best offered on a continuous basis (Thomas, 1991).

Gifted and Remedial

A possible curriculum advantage of YRE is the intersession, which may be used to provide immediate remediation, as well as enrichment without waiting for the customary summer school. Schools can use this period for students needing remedial help in reading, math, spelling, and study skills, or to offer specialized programs in the arts and sciences.

Students experiencing learning difficulties in a traditional calendar must usually go through nine months of failure and frustration before they are invited to attend

summer school - far too late for effective remediation to occur. In contrast, intermittent vacations accommodate more frequent remediation in direct response to student needs (Ballinger, 1990).

EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS

The United States has the shortest school year (180 days) of any other industrialized nation. In most of the European countries the school year is at least 220 days. Japanese children attend school for 240 days each year, and Russian children attend school for 210 days each year.

The primary reason given for not changing the school calendar is that of tradition. Former U.S. Education Secretary William Bennett stated that rethinking our vacation plans is "a reasonable price to pay for the promise of more successful lives for our children" (Bradford, 1991).

Continuity of Education

Eighty percent of the material learned in college classes is forgotten within six months of the end of the course. The concept that schools, like hospitals, are helping institutions, and should never close, is gaining acceptance. Students should be able to learn any of the 12 months; they should not find a "closed" sign on the door in July (Glines, 1990).

Losses in retention during the school year occur overnight, over weekends, over holiday periods, and especially, over the long summer break of the traditional school calendar. Even if children progress at the same rate as their peers, schools operating with the traditional

calendars will find that disadvantaged students forget as much as three months of school learning every summer. This pattern of forgetting can produce a child who is one year behind after three years of schooling, and two years behind after six years; even if she has progressed at the same rate as her peers during the school year (Morse, 1992).

Yet, children do not all learn at the same rate. If we don't want a high academic failure rate among children who have difficulty with academics, we need to provide them with extra learning time and extra teaching. For the student with learning difficulties, intersessions could provide time for work on areas of weakness without the stigma of staying back a whole year. This might reduce the cumulative failure that leads to dropout, by allowing less advantaged students to catch up. Even if a term needs to be repeated, it certainly makes sense not to allow failure to perpetuate throughout the entire year (Serifs, 1990).

The nature of shorter terms and frequent breaks creates potential for improved learning. Shorter vacations improve retention and reduce the amount of review needed. There is much educational potential in the use of vacation or intersession time (Serifs, 1990).

"Learning is an incremental accumulation of knowledge and skill requiring constant, continuing reinforcement for full mastery" (Brekke, 1990). Madeline Hunter, in Retention Theory for Teachers, states that the relation of practice to retention is more complex than doing something again and

again and again. It requires that we distribute practice over a long period of time, rather than massing our practice in a short period of time. Dr.Hunter advises that mass practice is necessary at the beginning of a learning. Then it is necessary to distribute practice. The massing of practice makes for fast learning; distributed practice makes that learning endure. "The so-called traditional/agricultural calendar wasn't structured for educational reasons; in fact the three-month break in instructional continuity violates the most basic principles of effective schools research and learning theory" (Brekke, 1990).

Learning Retention

If students' longest break from the classroom is one month instead of three, it is possible to avoid what can be called "the long summer of forgetting". In addition, YR teachers normally don't have to spend the first four to six weeks each fall reviewing material previously covered (Poimbeauf, 1987). If less review time is needed it would seem that there would be added time for instruction in the YR calendar (Alcorn, 1992).

Ninety-five percent of YR parents and fifty percent of traditional parents believed that the short, frequent breaks improved learning retention (Baker, 1990).

Remedial and Migrant Students

The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that three out of every five children born today will be living in a single-parent household before they reach the age of eighteen. One out of eight children are born with medical problems. Children account for forty percent of the Nation's poor; malnutrition affects nearly a half-million children; families now make up the largest and fastest growing segment of the homeless; about sixty percent of the mothers are in the work force; and twenty-five percent of the children will be on welfare at some point before adulthood (Bradford, 1991). These problems provide staggering challenges for the teachers and school administrators. The educators must address the needs of the children and at the same time prepare each child educationally to enter the work force.

Short, multiple vacations can especially benefit the educationally, mentally, and physically disadvantaged, those receiving school nutrition lunch service; and non-English speaking pupils. Children on federal breakfast and lunch programs need not go without the meals for three consecutive months, since they do not miss any school meals if they attend all the intersessions.

Continuous programs during the summer months allow children of migrant families to attend school whenever they reside in the district. Under the conventional calendar,

migrant youth often miss many weeks of instruction as their parents relocate; some are in school only 50 to 75 days. In YRE districts, migrant children average 135 days.

Shortened curricular units can be especially beneficial for bilingual, learning disabled, and the educationally handicapped (Association of California School Administrors, Sacramento, 1988).

Specific Cognitive Retention Problems of Migrant Children:

- Migrant and disadvantaged children lose 27% more learning during summer months than their peers.
- Migrant and disadvantaged children miss more learning time in school due to mobility and excessive absenteeism.
-Migrant and disadvantaged children suffer more illness, social, and economic interference to learning and retention than their peers.
- Migrant students lose access to supportive school and community services such as lunch programs, health services, testing cycles, and special education services.
- Migrant students lose access to supplementary school programs such as team sports, clubs, music, and work experience programs. (Oxnard School District, Calif. 1990).

Time Blocks For Unit Teaching

YR calendars provide convenient blocks of time that divide neatly into teaching units, and quick responses to

learning difficulties. Problems can be remedied in a matter of weeks (during the next vacation, for instance), instead of months.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADDITIONAL SALARY INCREASES

Every seven years, nearly half of the teachers in the United States leave the teaching profession (Anthony, 1988, Darling-Hammond, 1984). One of the major reasons is the attractiveness of higher salaries offered in other professions outside the teaching field (Murnane, Singer, Willet, Kemple, and Olsen, 1991).

A study in New York indicates that one teacher in three holds a second job during the school year, and 53 percent work during the summer. In other words, teaching is not the sole occupation of many teachers (Doyle and Finn, 1985).

Year-round school could give meaningful employment to teachers during intersessions and optional terms. Then quality professionals would be given the opportunity to earn higher annual wages, and may not leave the teaching profession (Zykowski, 1991).

Teachers can extend their contract year, and thus earn additional compensation by: (1)Serving as substitutes during their vacation periods; (2)Teaching specialized enrichment intersession classes; (3)Taking on differentiated educational assignments during their vacation times - such as developing instructional units or materials; or (4)Serving as interim administrators during the absence of a principal or supervisor. All of this work occurs within the boundaries of the teaching profession. Many states add the extra compensation they earn to basic salary for later retirement benefits (Ballinger, 1990).

Teachers who participated in the Orchard Plan experiment initiated in 1987, had the following comments regarding the opportunity to increase salaries by 20%, as a result of extended contracts: As one teacher noted, "Now we are being paid what teachers really deserve. In addition, our schedule is now comparable to other professionals." As one male teacher put it, "For the first time in years I've had a full time job. Now I'm employed in a position where I don't have to seek employment when the children are on break." Another said, "I enjoy the 4-week break in the summer, 2 weeks at Christmas, and a week in spring. As a single parent I would have to work in the summer anyhow" (female, eighth-grade teacher). A female, third-grade teacher said, "I no longer have to find a summer job to support my household."
(Gandara, 1992)

DISCIPLINE

There has been a drastic change from rural to urban lifestyles in our society. There is a substantial increase of women in the labor force, children born out of wedlock, and single-parent families. This has resulted in a dramatic increase of unsupervised teens and latchkey children. These children spend a great deal of time, especially in extended vacations, in unstructured play and watching T.V. Wasted time and delinquency often result. Authorities have noted a decrease in juvenile delinquency in YRE systems, and parents of students involved in these programs, favor the YR concept (NEA, 1987).

Year-round schooling, may reduce the incidence of juvenile crime to the degree that fewer numbers of students are not enrolled in school at any one time. In a nationwide survey, school officials were asked to assess the effect of YR schedules on juvenile crime rates; 60% of the responding school officials indicated a decrease in the delinquency rate among students enrolled in extended school year programs compared to the rate among students who attended the same schools before the extended school year programs were installed (Merino, 1983).

In a YRE Evaluation Report for Orange County Public Schools, in Orlando, Florida, multi-track principals and teachers reported that there were fewer discipline referrals related to going to and from the buses. Teachers reported

that there was less confusion in the hallways because there were fewer students in the common areas. Teachers also reported that the noise level in the cafeterias during lunch was lower, and that there was less confusion as students went through the lunch lines (Fardig, 1991).

Vandalism

There are reports of reduced vandalism to schools on YRE calendars. These schools are not standing empty for long periods of time. There is also less extended time for stress to build up between the schools and the students when there are more vacations spread over the school year. Oxnard has experienced a drop in vandalism costs from $82,000 to less than $10,000 a year (Peltier, 1991).

Administrators have reported a decrease in vandalism, illness, and absence. They have used the staggered vacation plan to minimize student gangs by placing members on different tracks (Baker, 1990).

When school personnel, including night custodians are on duty until midnight and occupy YRE school buildings virtually 12 months a year, these schools tend to be unattractive targets for vandals and burglars...(Brekke, 1984).

ABSENTEEISM

Pro

Most school districts with YRE report that both teacher and student attendance has improved (Ballinger, 1990). The reason for improved attendance was associated with the more frequent vacation periods. With more frequent vacatons, teachers appeared to have less need to use sick-leave days for rest and recuperation. Also, students seemed more eager to return to school to see friends after a short vacation period (Ballinger, Kirschenbaum, and Poimbeauf, 1987).

Brekke (1984) found that "YRE teachers were absent for illness an average of one day (20%) less than traditional teachers. During the 1981-82 school year, YRE teachers were absent for illness an average of 0.9 days (16%) less.." (Zykowski, 1991)..

Cons

According to the Program Evaluation in Orlando, Florida, it was of interest to note, that based on three pilot schools, there were no indications that attendance of students or teachers changed significantly after implementation of the YRE calendar (Fardig, 1991).

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Most extra-curricular conflicts, especially in the area of sports, occur in the senior, and possibly, junior high school; not at the elementary level. Even though this paper deals primarily with YRE at the elementary level, attention will be given to these programs at the secondary level.

Athletic /Sports Programs

Pros

One concern has been that the athletic and activities programs would suffer because of YR schedule (Mussatti, 1981). However, White (1988) reported an advantage to these cocurricular programs in the YRE. He noted that "Coaches draw player talent from generally larger pupil populations, and the school that is open all year keeps in contact with its talented participants during all 12 months." Students who were eligible to participate in an athletic or activities program when they completed their last term were eligible to participate in these programs during their vacation time (White, 1988).

The results of the 1989-90 sports seasons were the most positive in the history of Hesperia High School. Teams competed in playofffs in all major sports and many minor sports. The football coach was able to get his team on "B"

track, which placed the players on break during September and October, the majority of the football season. The students could concentrate on their athletic program without having the conflict of homework and classes. Often, athlete's grades suffer during the sports season. With YR schedules it is possible to get many players on off-track schedules for their playing season (Haney, 1990).

Cons

On the other hand, not all members of the football team can be scheduled for the fall games. The same considerations hold true for co-curricular programs; students may miss meetings of the Spanish club or be off-track when the annual staff is putting the last touches on the publication, unless they choose to come to school when they are on vacation (Schmeider, 1992).

Music/Fine Arts

On June, 1993 I was fortunate enough to have an interview with Dr. Don Doyle. Dr. Doyle is the Music Advisor for the Los Angeles Unified School District. He is also on the Committee for the California Music Educators Association on Year-Round Schooling. The following is a summary of the information given to me during this interview:

There are two approaches which can be adopted in the YR

school calendar in regards to an instrumental or choral music program: (1)On-site music teachers: and (2)A traveling program. Each program has different effects on the school, the music teacher, and the children.

The first approach, on-site music teachers, really holds little change for the multi-track calendar. When a track is on vacation, the teacher simply reschedules their time. The major problem for the music teacher is the number of children they can reach. It is difficult to reach every child enough times throughout the year. The positive attribute about this approach is the fact that the teacher is at the same school year round.

The second approach, the traveling program, seems to lend itself to more cons by the music teachers, although it is the more popular approach, The approach is divided into two subtopics: (1)the vocal-classroom/choir teacher; and the (2)instrumental music director.

If the vocal classroom teacher or choir director is assigned to a specific track, they often have difficulty seeing the other tracks equally. Often times, school districts allow these music teachers to schedule their own vacations, so that they can fit in all the tracks more equally. These teachers' most common complaints about the YRE approach is that kids are going on and off tracks too often, and they are always having to play "catch-up" with them. The children who have been on-track get bored during class while the teacher is trying to "catch-up" the children

who have just come back from vacation. Often these teachers feel that a full year's growth doesn't occur with so many breaks.

The YR instrumental director faces a different set of problems with his music program. Some programs schedule certain instruments on tracks. This is very detrimental to the continuity of the orchestra or band; as the entire ensemble meeting together would never occur.

Some directors have tried to solve this dilemma by having each track have its own separate program.

A third solution that has been experimented with, is having all children in all tracks participate in the same program. The extra children participating would make up for the ones who are off track at any give time (Doyle, 1993).

On June 19, 1993, I interviewed Mr. Joseph Print. He is a former Instrumental Music Director for Long Beach Unified School District. He taught 28 years in the district under the traditional school year calendar, and had no previous experience with the YR calendar. In his school program he taught Beginning Band, Beginning Orchestra, Intermediate Band, Intermediate Orchestra, Senior Band, and Senior Orchestra. He had the following concerns about restructuring his program to that of a YR calendar:

Seasonal programs, Christmas and Spring Concerts, and Festivals would all be affected by the calendar structure. Depending on the track arrangement, a director would lose certain valuable musicians, or an entire instrumental

section, such as the cello section, or a woodwind section; just weeks before a Festival or Seasonal Concert.

There would also be much difficulty with the coordination of beginning, intermediate, and senior groups. If the beginning band finished in September, there might not be an intermediate group to place them in until that track returned, say in November. Therefore, there would be no continuity between groups, which is so important in a music program. The musicians might even lose interest, not practice, or become involved in another class during that time.

Another foreseen problem would be that of the care and maintenance of the school instruments. Summer is traditionally the time when school conductors take their instruments to be cleaned and repaired. Often this takes several weeks to accomplish. In the YR music program the care and upkeep of valuable instruments would be very difficult to maintain.

The last concern he expressed was difficulty performing any musical literature which contained soloist parts. It would be very disconcerting to find that the first violin soloist in the Bach Double was going off track the week before the Festival, or your concertmaster would be off track during your Spring Festival, in which you had planned to perform Danse Macabre (Print, 1993).

PLANNING A YEAR-ROUND CALENDAR

In his article, "Will Year-Round Go Round?", Ben Graves gives the following planning concerns that need to be considered; whether a new school is being planned or an existing facility is being modified:

-"For a new building, consideration should be given to the orientation of the building and the location of windows to help lower the inside temperature during summer months.

- Meeting rooms, auditoriums, staff rooms and conference rooms may need to accommodate larger groups. Occasions such as holiday programs, all-staff meetings, and open-house events will require more space because more people will attend.

- Additional administrators and support staff will require office space.

- The combination of heat and poor air quality during summer months may require large a multi-purpose room for physical education classes.

- An inside eating area is a necessity for schools in warm climates. Shade structures and shade trees for outside eating areas may be required.

- Twelve months of use requires that durable and serviceable interior and exterior materials be used.

- Multi-track schedules require storage for both teacher and student materials and books. Storage space needs to be close to a comfortable work area to permit convenient preparation of instructional materials.

- Maintenance is a concern. Careful attention should be given to the selection of materials, surfaces and equipment that can be repaired, cleaned, and easily serviced.
- The parking area needs to be sufficient for all assigned staff, support staff, volunteers, and visitors. Overflow parking for special events needs to be considered.
- In most climates, air conditioning is essential.
- Energy use should be a top design consideration. Daylight becomes an economical design solution. Proper selection of glazing for windows and skylights will minimize heat gain within space utilizing daylight.
- Landscaping should include selection and placement of trees and plants to shade buildings to reduce heat gain. Keep in mind that large-scale landscaping projects that were normally accomplished during summer vacation will have to occur during shorter breaks." (Taken from: Graves, 1991).

SYNTHESIS, ANALYSIS, AND CONCLUSIONS

Synthesis

The majority of research reviewed in this paper indicated that there is: (1)inconclusive evidence of increased student academic achievement; (2)a moderate savings in building and maintenance costs, but an increase in personnel salaries and cooling costs; and (3)a general tendency toward acceptance of the program by parents of children attending of YR schools; but strong opposition by some of these parents, as well as other parents and various community members.

The effects of YRE have been very difficult to measure systematically, and there are such a vast number of variables in a school system. Even when student gains or losses can be documented, it is usually impossible to point to one single variable. It is very difficult to hold all other independent variables constant in a public school, as would be possible in a laboratory setting. Therefore, it is not surprising that there is little concrete, positive proof supporting or condemning YRE.

YRE has many favorable aspects, but implementation is very difficult. YRE is not the answer to all a school district's problems, but it should not be ruled out before it is given fair consideration.

Analysis

The research and literature in this paper has been presented largely in pro/con format. The limitations of this research project would be that the issues are mostly common arguments for or against YRE, and should not always be interpreted as research findings.

The following is an analysis of the major key points presented:

Pros

1. There is less learning loss with shorter periodic vacations.
2. Eliminates the boredom of students during the traditional three-month summer vacation.
3. Helps alleviate the problem of no summer school.
4. Choices for family vacations are increased.
5. The majority of parents in other YR programs are satisfied with the schedule.
6. Students like the more frequent shorter vacations.
7. The spaced vacations are an advantage to families.
8. Parents report more student interest and enthusiasm, improved attitudes, and less fatigue and boredom.
9. Teachers like the frequent breaks.

10. Teachers like the improved attitudes of students, parents, and other teachers.
11. Teachers review less and find that students appear to retain more.
12. There is less teacher fatigue and burnout.
13. Studies show that year-round school is better for disadvantaged students.
14. Opportunity for reinforcement of learning through the use of intersessions.
15. Improved attendance of both pupils and teachers.
16. Increased enthusiasm and vitality resulting from periodic vacation breaks.
17. Reduced overcrowding of school and community facilities.
18. Provides more flexibility for migrant students to make up missed work without losing a whole year of schooling.
19. Opportunity for increased salaries on extended contracts for teachers and other personnel.

Cons

1. There may be increased operational costs for air-conditioning.
2. There is a lack of "hard data" evidence of achievement gain.
3. Balancing the number of students on each track can be difficult if parents' first choice is to be maintained.
4. More planning, coordination and record keeping is required at the school level.

5. There is an increase in administration time. Principals' contracts of employment may need to be extended. Secretaries also have increased work loads, and may need 12-month contracts instead of 10-month contracts.
6. Principals report a lack of opportunity to work with the staff as a whole.
7. Communication with off-track students can be a problem.
8. Scheduling can be difficult.
9. Some teachers are opposed to having to move classrooms.
10. Some families report conflicts with their family lifestyles.
11. Some conflicts can occur with summer recreation and camp activities.
12. Child care my be a problem.
13. Teachers find it difficult to work on advanced degrees during the summer.
14. Families may have children on different schedules if member attends a YR school while the other members attend a traditional nine-month program.
15. The prejudice against the program that exists in the public mind in places where the system has never been used.
16. Major expenses will be incurred in changing from a traditional to a YR system.
17. Complicates the operation of performing extra-curricular student activities.
18. Opposition from the community.

Conclusions

Any school system seriously considering a YR program should carefully weigh the pros and cons of each issue before making the final decision. The focus of any such change in the structure of our schools must be for the improvement of the quality of education for our children, and the improvement of the overall working conditions of our teachers.

Research on the effects of YR schools is limited; and generally inconclusive. Teachers and parents can be supportive of YRE as long as they are provided with adequate support and given time to adjust to changes from the traditional schedule. Finally, YRE may not be appropriate for all communities. Rural areas, in particular, may still see the need for schedules which allow students to contribute to their families' livelihood.

Pros and cons of YRE programs center around financial, social, and academic issues. The implementation of such a program completely restructures the schedules and lifestyles of the traditional family. The infrastructure has to be totally reorganized to accommodate the length of the school year, the salary increases, and the maintenance of the schools.

Advocates see benefits for pupils of all abilities, potential for uplifting the teaching profession, and fiscal advantage to the taxpayer. But these merits are questioned

by others who claim that research is limited and inconclusive. Either way, acceptance and implementation of YR schools is currently on the rise; therefore, requiring a closer look.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are based on findings of this research project:

Extended Contracts: Make use of extended contracts wherever possible. It increases financial benefits for both teachers and principals, and creates more flexibility in staffing.

Families of Teachers: Teachers having their children on a traditional calendar, while they work on a YR schedule is a problem. Teachers need to be permitted to transfer their own elementary students to their own school or another YR calendar.

Room Rotation: First, if possible, make "roving" a voluntary action. If this is not feasible, incorporate incentives to be in a roving position. Second, make roving as easy and pleasant as possible - including rolling file cabinets, extra teachers' desks, custodial help for teachers, secure storage facilities, and allotted time for the move and new set-up.

Remedial Students: Children scoring below a certain given percentile should be required to attend intersessions.

Parent/Community Involvement: Involve parents and the surrounding community in the decision and implementation process to the greatest extent possible. Their support is vital to the success of the YRE program.

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